

medical products or services for sale to the public should at all times openly disclose all of their prices and guarantee that everyone has an opportunity to know the price of a pill before they swallow it and to guarantee that everybody knows the price of a chest x ray or any other medical procedure before they actually have that procedure done.

Transparency, that sunshine that's needed to help create a medical marketplace, is critically important. No discrimination against any citizen and complete transparency will help create that medical marketplace.

But we also need to develop a standard health benefit plan, one that will guarantee that if you are sick and covered by that standard benefit plan, you'll be in your house, not the poorhouse, a standard plan that each and every insurance company must offer to every citizen within regional markets to guarantee that a marketplace creates that competition to drive down prices immediately, not in 2013, but in early 2010.

Asthma is an important condition. It's a very common condition, best managed by specialists who cooperate collaboratively with primary care physicians.

As we go forward to reform our health care system, I hope that the House leadership will understand how important it is to collaborate between primary care and specialty care and to guarantee that no discrimination, complete transparency in medical pricing, and the standard health benefit plan will exist in our legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, with my apologies to Charlie Daniels, I have some new words for one of his songs, and it goes like this:

Democrats went forth from Washington carrying a bill they wanted to seal. They were in a bind because they were way behind and looking for some doctors to deal.

You may think your health care is in pretty good shape, but give the Dems their due. They're willing to bet a fiddle of gold against medicine sold because they think they know better than you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deliver a message to physicians and their patients across our great Nation. Don't be fooled by political attempts to buy off your support for a bill which the American people have already rejected. Despite the President's claim that health care reform will not add to the deficit, there is one very large problem: Medicare physician payment reform.

□ 2015

Just yesterday, Democrats in the other body attempted to force through

a bill which purported to fix a fundamental flaw in the way Medicare pays physicians. Attempting to move this legislation outside of the context of a health care reform package only underscores the fact that the fix is not paid for, will add to the backs of all American taxpayers, and is being used as a political bait-and-switch to lure providers into supporting a flawed health care reform bill that has already been rejected by the people.

President Obama has made repeated promises that he will not sign a health care bill that "adds one dime to our deficit, either now or in the future, period." By that very logic, the bills that are now pending in the House and the Senate are dead on arrival if President Obama wishes to keep his promise to the American people.

The problems with the sustainable growth rate, commonly referred to as SGR, have forced this body to act repeatedly to override detrimental cuts to physician reimbursement that is prescribed by this flawed formula. At the very core of this issue is patient access to physicians which literally hangs in the balance. If these cuts are allowed to occur, seniors will face an unprecedented loss of access to care, and doctors will be unable to continue to treat seniors when payment rates are far below the cost of providing care.

With a looming 21.5 percent reduction in reimbursement scheduled to go into effect at the end of this year, it is not surprising that the administration would use this political leverage to advance an agenda for health care reform that on its own merit has been and continues to be rejected by many of the American people.

Aneurin Bevan, the Minister of Health of Great Britain, when asked how he convinced his country's physicians to go along with the government takeover of health care, said, "I stuffed their mouths with gold." Mr. Speaker, this Congress and the Obama administration are attempting to do the same with fool's gold. Instead of being honest and forthcoming with the American people, the administration and Democratic leadership in Congress are choosing simply to ignore the cost of fixing SGR using budgetary games that will add another \$250 billion to the Federal deficit. Clearly, dimes aren't being added to the deficit, hundreds of billions of dollars are. This, of course, is in addition to billions of new taxes on individuals and small businesses and cuts to popular Medicare programs like Medicare Advantage.

What is at stake is our ability as a Nation to enact meaningful reforms which drive down cost, improve quality, and increase access to health care coverage of Americans by their own choosing. In fact, CBO estimates that tort reform alone would save Americans over \$54 billion over the next 10 years, and that's just one example. So much for bending the cost curve, though, because malpractice reform is being left behind to be fixed another day.

So to my colleagues and physicians looking to strike a deal on that fiddle of gold, remember, it is not your own soul that this legislation will steal; it is the soul of health care in America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WEINER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. POSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POSEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WESTMORELAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Let me thank the Speaker for recognizing us today. And